

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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43

ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0163

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 1503

EXDIS

E. O. 11653: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ASEC, AR

SUBJECT: NOTE TO FOREIGN MINISTRY ON EGAN CASE: SCHNEIDER CASE
MENTIONED

REF: A. STATE 047646 AND B. STATE 048632

1. POLITICAL COUNSELOR DELIVERED FOLLOWING NOTE TO CHIEF OF NORTH AMERICAN DESK IN FOREIGN MINISTRY AT 1700 HOURS MARCH 4. HE DID NOT CONNECT SCHNEIDER CASE WITH THE NOTE (WE HAD NOT RECEIVED REF B), BUT DID RAISE IT WITH FONMIN TFFICIAL, NOTING THAT WE UNDERSTOOD SCHNEIDER HAD STATED IN LIMA THAT HIS RELEASE HAD COME AS RESULT OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN GUERRILLAS AND GOVERNMENT AND THAT EMBASSY WAS PUZZLED BY THIS OBVIOUS VARIANCE FROM WHAT WE HAD UNDERSTOOD GOA POLICY TO BE.

2. FORNMIN OFFICIAL SAID HE COULD NOT COMMENT SINCE HE UNAWARE OF ANY OF THE BACKGROUND AND DESPITE EFFORTS ON HIS PART TO FIND OUT CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE SCHNEIDER CASE, HE HAD BEEN UNABLE TO OBTAIN ANYTHING FROM FEDERAL POLICE OTHER THAN A BIO ON SCHNEIDER.

3. TEXT OF NOTE IS AS FOLLOWS:

QUOTE -

NO. 87

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THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA PRESENTS ITS COMPLIMENTS TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND WORSHIP OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC AND REFERS TO THE MURDER IN CORDOBA ON FEBRUARY 28 OF JOHN PATRICK EGAN, THE UNITED STATES CONSULAR AGENT IN THAT CITY. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA HAS TAKEN NOTE OF THE FACT THAT THE POLICE GUARDS PROMISED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC HAD BEEN WITHDRAWN FROM THE CONSULAR AGENCY SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE MR. EGAN WAS KIDNAPPED ON FEBRUARY 26 AND HAD NOT BEEN RETURNED DESPITE MR. EGAN'S REPEATED REQUESTS TO THE PROVINCIAL POLICE AUTHORITIES. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA WISHES TO REMIND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC THAT THE CONSULAR AGENCY IN CORDOBA WAS LEFT OPEN ONLY BECAUSE OF THE ASSURANCES OF 24-HOUR PROTECTION GIVEN TO AMBASSADOR ROBERT C. HILL BY FOREIGN MINISTER ALBERTO JUAN VIGNES IN A CONVERSATION ON MAY 9, 1974, AND REITERATED BY THE THEN CHIEF OF FEDERAL POLICE ALBERTO VILLAR IN A DISCUSSION WITH EMBASSY OFFICIALS ON MAY 11, 1974. ON AUGUST 21, AMBASSADOR HILL INFORMED FOREIGN MINISTER VIGNES THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA HAD AGREED TO KEEP THE CONSULAR AGENCY IN CORDOBA OPEN ON THE BASIS OF THESE ASSURANCES THAT ADEQUATE SECURITY WOULD BE PROVIDED.

IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE ASSURANCES, THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA BELIEVES IT IS ENTITLED TO A PROMPT AND WRITTEN EXPLANATION FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC AS TO WHY THERE WERE NO GUARDS AT THE CONSULAR AGENCY. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA EXPECTS THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC WILL CONDUCT A FULL INVESTIGATION OF THE REMOVAL OF THE POLICE GUARDS WHICH LED TO MR. EGAN'S TRAGIC DEATH, AND THAT THE RESULTS OF THIS INVESTIGATION WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES.

THE ONLY EXPLANATION OFFERED SO FAR HAS COME FROM THE FEDERAL INTERVENTOR IN CORDOBA, BRIGADIER RAUL OSCAR LACABANNE, WHO HAS STATED THAT "THE POLICEMEN INVOLVED IN GUARDING THE CONSULAR AGENCY WERE NEEDED ELSEWHERE." THIS EXPLANATION SUGGESTS THAT THE ASSURANCES OF PROTECTION GIVEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC ARE CONDITIONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

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IS TOTALLY UNSATISFACTORY.

THE EMBASSY TAKES THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RENEW TO THE MINISTRY THE ASSURANCES OF ITS HIGHEST CONSIDERATION.

UNQUOTE -
HILL

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